

/927 cont. /

to help us because he appreciates us Yamana! If only he can bring to pass what he has promised us, namely, to intercede for us [with the Chilean government] so that we may continue to live peacefully in this place (341). I am happy about this

341. He has the following in mind. For a number of years the Lawrence brothers had leased the region around Puerto Mejillones on the north shore of Navarino Island from the Chilean government who permitted the Yamana to settle in this small harbor. The lease would run out the following year, and there was danger that this piece of land would fall into other hands. This would make the future very uncertain for the Yamana, and they had reason to be afraid that they would be driven out of this place which they had learned to love. In view of this, I had promised them to present their wishes to the Ministerio de Colonización in Santiago. Later I kept my promise. Now the few surviving Yamana are spending their last days in this small harbor. Compare Gusinde (d):60 and page 364 /untranslated/.

[pleasant prospect]. That is why I took up the song and carried it on for so long!" Immediately afterward he continued his singing. The other people listened attentively and fell into a solemn mood, for his high voice was extraordinarily pleasant. Soon he paused again: "Truly, I am an old man. For a long time I have not taken part in a čičéxau. I am one of the last of the old people [of former times]. In my younger years I was always on hand wherever čičéxau took place. I was always among the first who took up the singing. For a long time I have not taken part in it for I am old. When I was young we went down to the beach at night to bathe; we sang as we did so, and I was never absent. And yet, to this day I have some /928/ strength and joy left. Truly, it is not right that I have been inactive until now. I shall summon the last of my strength and all the younger people will see that I as an old man am not holding back. So I shall go on singing!" He sang even more vigorously than before; he even stood up to dance

/936 cont./

788 like to do that!" He: "Certainly, it pleases you that I tell you  
625 everything!" Enthusiastic "awāi." He: "Good, I shall stay here  
533 for some time yet, until my stomach is empty. Afterward I shall  
fly back to the high seas." After a loud awāi and general singing  
again, Thomas interjected: "Now I feel relieved, cheerful, and  
fresh!"

The people in the one row held their heads up and their hands up to their eyebrows, as though they were looking into the distance over the heads of the people seated in the opposite row. This was a challenge to a singing competition, in order to stimulate the other row. The winefke<sup>2</sup> cried: "Again high waves are rising!" After the awāi from outside, Walter said: "We began this ciéxau so that those two Whites could see it. For ourselves we usually celebrate it at another time of year." He continued, very perturbed: "I am the Yeta<sup>1</sup>ita of this Great Hut (356).

356. He wants to say that rage is seething within him just as in that malevolent earth spirit.

-- Of all my kinsfolk and of all of us who once lived in the east (357), I am the only one still alive. Although I still have my

357. Walter comes from Lennox Island,  
northeast<sup>1</sup> of Navarino Island.

home district [as native country], nevertheless it no longer belongs to me and has now become /937/ another region (358). Of my

[648]

358. This island which politically now belongs to Chile has for a long time been leased to farmers for sheep-raising. Therefore Chile arbitrarily keeps the natives away from the Europeans settled there.

kinsfolk and my [prior] native country only the waves are left to me. When I die, the waves will cover me, too; then there will be no one left of the people of the east!" Several persons, moved by sorrow, interrupted him. Walter continued: "I am very much

<sup>1</sup> [Actually, southeast. — Analyst.]

/963 cont. /

186  
423 of language and way of life no less than on sharing the same native region. They regard the fragmented maze of islands within the triangle between the Cape Horn cliffs, Brecknock Peninsula, and Punta Julieta at Bahía Aguirre as their country, within whose boundaries they alone, from ancient times, have the exclusive right to live and to hunt. Actually they make their property rights, in the widest sense of the word, apply to this whole area.

423  
648 They condemn the crossing of these borders by their Indian neighbors in the northeast, as well as in the southwest, as trespass on their land, simply because it belongs to them alone (380).

380. Spegazzini (a):168 has mentioned  
"that the boundaries of a tribe are well  
defined; no Aluciluf /Alacaluf/ canoe  
goes into Iajan /Yahgan/ territory unless  
it has a particular and important mission"  
/translated from Spanish/.

They do not drive off the intruders with weapons, but they regard their encroachment quite /964/ frankly as a legal offense. Only the families who reside in an area may grant their neighbors free entrance if personal reasons make it advisable.

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797 They also regard it as robbery when Europeans settle on their land and crowd out their countrymen. For the last few decades they have become resigned to this condition of constraint because they feel too weak to resist. Formerly they overwhelmed many a European ship with hostility and made its landing difficult in order to deprive the unpopular Whites of any possibility or desire to settle here (p. 250 /untranslated/). For the same reason even the missionaries were made to feel the resistance of the natives. For example, it cost the former much toil and labor to found the mission station in Ushuaia, but this did not make that region the property of the missionaries, according to the Indians, and they actually had to submit to all kinds of annoyances. It was only after direct negotiations that Bridges (MM:IV, 133;1870) could content himself with the following solution: "I got full permission from the natives of Ushuaia to take possession of any land for house and gardens. Next time I intend giving them some thing as a small acknowledgment" /cited in English/. Although

423 /964 cont. /

648 opposition for a long time has led to absolutely no result, the  
797 Yamana have never given up their exclusive legal claim to their  
native region.

423 They trace this claim back to their so-called revolutionary  
173 myth, which tells that in ancient times the women who were play-  
ing kina pushed into this region and continued their secret cere-  
mony here. Since this time, they say, all the Yamana have re-  
mained in one and the same place, and inasmuch as they were  
the first to take possession of this land for themselves, it has be-  
come their property.

423 The nature of the landscape has divided the whole Yamana  
635 territory into five large districts in which an equal number of dia-  
lects have developed (p. 199 /untranslated/). Each dialect group  
regards its home as, in a special sense, the common property of  
all its members. It is the field in which each one may devote him-  
self to the hunt for food without restraint. To begin with, the  
individual has no vested right to a specific animal and no priority  
in obtaining special products of the land. Without discrimination,  
everything within the boundaries of the dialect region is available  
to everyone living there. Thus, with regard to the natural prod-  
ucts of their circumscribed homeland, there is no personal prop-  
erty right; this becomes valid only at the moment when a person  
appropriates something for himself.

423 It is no less important to point out that only the members  
635 of the same dialect group may take what their circumscribed  
685 area /965/ holds. Persons whose homes are in a neighboring  
district generally do not have the right to cross the boundaries. A  
few exceptional cases are regarded as legally valid. If these ex-  
ceptions are misused, however, disputes may be kindled and, to  
be sure, precisely because of violation of the sovereign rights  
which only the actual owners of this region enjoy. They alone  
may indiscriminately appropriate in it whatever they need in the  
way of animals and goods, even if some of it serves in barter with  
people of another group.

It is obvious that every individual will defend the common  
possessions of his dialect group, to which he belongs by birth or  
marriage and in which he himself has a share. Whenever and  
wherever he observes encroachment by a neighbor, he at least  
disapproves of it and speaks of it to others in his immediate

/985 cont. /

156  
518 incomprehensible to us. They lose their equanimity particularly in cases of intentional insults and humiliations. This is even more true in instances of a serious offense against their own rights and especially of murder, each case of which is sooner or later avenged if the culprit does not atone for it in time. Almost no one quietly endures insults, no matter how small; instead, he uses the first good opportunity to obtain satisfaction. One must realize, however, that a person is able to wait years for this, and he may take his revenge at a time when the other party has almost completely forgotten the incident. Since the Yamana have such /986/ character traits, less serious brawls between individuals and between small groups are by no means rare. Bridges (i):13 has correctly characterized them as "very quarrelsome and touchy and the weaker were very careful not to offend the stronger and were very courteous in their manners and language, often dissembling with smiles and words of peace their hatred and disapproval" /cited in English/.

627 Since the entire tribe is broken up into very small family communities or hordes (p. 632), it is impossible from the start for considerable masses of people to band together for battles or wars. Inasmuch as actual revenge for murder is obligatory for the nearest kin of the murdered person, the matter is settled only between them and the opposite party. In any case, however, such occurrence rare in comparison with the above-mentioned quarrels. It would be entirely mistaken to assume that this ethnic group composed of several large divisions is constantly at war with its own kind. By nature they are anything but pugnacious, no matter how vengeful they are and how jealously sensitive of their personal honor. Anxious concern about their daily food requirements leaves them little time for the troublesome effort of constantly or almost constantly lying in wait for a hostile division.

•648 We need not repeat here anything about the relations of our Yamana with the Selk'nam (p. 234 /untranslated/), whom they generally met with apprehension, and with their western neighbors (p. 241 /untranslated/) whom they feared as cannibals (405). Their

405. Hyades (q):240 speaks without sufficient proof of an alleged hatred which "shows itself especially with regard to the neighboring peoples, Alakalouf /Alacaluf/ that is often bloody"

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/986 cont. /

and Ona; in this case it results in strife /translated from French/. Cooper:174 sums up the situation correctly, namely, that "as a rule on border territories the relations have been fairly peaceful" /cited in English/.

relations with Europeans (p. 246 /untranslated/), especially to missionaries (p. 288 /untranslated/), has also been treated in detail and has long been known. Cooper:174 characterizes it correctly and briefly as follows: "More commonly, however, the white man has, deliberately or unwittingly, been the first to give offence" /cited in English/. After the Whites spread out in the Cape Horn Archipelago and confiscated the useful land for themselves, there was nothing for the former sole owners of this region to do but to give in without resistance and with quiet resignation.

#### a. Causes

152  
578 The Yamana know no more than other primitive peoples how to control their hurt feelings, especially their feeling of injured honor, nor how to settle insults or humiliations in the amicable way of quiet, matter-of-fact explanation or through a sort of arbiter. /987/ Everyone personally and with his own fist sees to it that justice is done him and that he obtains what he believes to be adequate satisfaction. The individual is first of all sole judge and avenger; in certain instances his nearest relatives help him in protecting his rights.

152 The desire and passion for revenge are extraordinarily emphasized among the Yamana (406). Sometimes they are so carried

406. It is misleading when Hyades (q):240 maintains: "The desire for vengeance does not occupy the Fuegians much..." /translated from French/. The small number of words for the feeling of revenge is no measure of its strength. In this connection see other opinions in Waitz:III, 507.

114 Viamonte. Their peregrinations through the heart of the island brought them in close contact with the Ona tribe. Indeed, they were the first white men to establish friendly relations with the Ona, and two of the brothers, Messrs. Lucas and William Bridges, have been formally initiated as members of the tribe by the *Alásten* ceremony herein described.

We have related this story at some length because so much literature of ethnological interest depends on it. The elder Mr. Bridges has left among his reports to the missionary society a mine of ethnological information, while Mr. Lawrence's observations are also valuable. In addition Mr. Bridges has written several articles dealing directly with native life, published in various scientific journals, and he has left a monument to himself in what is probably the most intensive study of primitive linguistics ever carried out. Of this we shall have more to say.

Beside the contributions from the pen of Mr. Bridges, he aided greatly the success of the scientific studies made by the Argentine, French, and Italian governments in Tierra del Fuego during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The important works of Hyades and Bove gain authority from this association. In recent years the Bridges' children, especially Messrs. Lucas and William Bridges, have sponsored practically all the information about the Ona tribe which has found its way into print. Indeed (without detracting from the merits of any writer) it may be said that the importance of most published data on the Ona varies according to whether or not the information was obtained from this generous and hospitable family.

648 After the Argentine government had established itself at Ushuaia a gold rush to Tierra del Fuego took place, which caused the coming of many undesirables. The result of this sudden contact with Europeans was disastrous to the native tribes.

The history of white settlement of the island emanating from the missionary post in the south is one of kindly dealing with the native races. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the north. Sheep were introduced into the northern part of Tierra del Fuego in 1878, and trouble with the natives immediately ensued, for while the Indians had no objection to somebody stocking their game tracts, at the same time they maintained their right to hunt the "white guanaco" on lands which they regarded as their own. Naturally the hard-pressed pioneers of what has now become a

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great industry objected to having their sheep killed, and they retaliated by killing the Indians. 648

Thus there soon sprang into being a class of professional head-hunters, recruited from the shepherds and miners, who received one pound sterling from the ranchers for each Indian head—man, woman, or child. The Indians, on foot and armed with bows and arrows, had little chance in the open plains against horsemen with rifles. Some of the atrocities committed in the '80's are recounted by Fuentes Rabe;<sup>1</sup> the writer heard from discrete and trustworthy sources many similar tales of brutality.

In 1891 a Salesian mission was established on Dawson island, and in 1893 a second station was set up at Cape Peñas and later transferred to Rio Grande. Although dedicated for three-quarters of a century to the eradication of troublesome Indians, the Government decided to stop the scandals arising from head-hunting by turning the Indians over to the missions. To this end troops scoured the country, rounded up the natives, and drove them like cattle to the mission stations. Families were mercilessly broken up. Strange foods caused sickness and implanted the belief that they were being poisoned. Unaccustomed European clothes and indoor quarters—as in so many well-intended missionary efforts—brought pneumonia and tuberculosis, and augmented the effect of their vitamin-deficient diet. Liquor and venereal diseases, against which Indians have surprisingly little resistance, both took their toll. Few indeed survived the "civilizing" process. Today the Dawson Island mission has been abandoned. The east-coast mission still existed in 1924, ostensibly to support two aged native women in idleness, in reality as a prosperous sheep ranch. 648 797

The record of the white settlers in Tierra del Fuego, with of course certain splendid exceptions, is not one to be reviewed with pride; not the Indians but Europeans have proved the greater savages. Missionary efforts, however well intended, have hastened the course of their neophytes to the grave. No more striking example can be adduced of the importance of anthropological and medical training for those who would change the religion and alter the habits of heathen peoples.

One of the chief ethnological results of the northern missions has been the establishment of the Museo Regional "Mayorino Borgatello" at Punta Arenas. Unfortunately the ethnological 114

<sup>1</sup> 1923, II, 177-183.

291 Women wear rather more clothing, that is, they have nearly the whole skin of a guanaco, or seal, wrapped about them, and usually a diminutive apron. The upper part of the wrapper, above a string which is tied around the waist, serves to carry an infant. Neither men nor women have any substitute for shoes.

302 Both sexes oil themselves, or rub their bodies with grease; and daub  
301 their faces and bodies with red, black, or white. A fillet is often worn around the head, which upon ordinary occasions is simply a string, made of sinews; but if going to war or dressed for show, the fillet is ornamented with white down, white feathers, or pieces of cloth, if they have obtained any from shipping. . . .

411 It is rather curious that each of these natives is trained to a particular pursuit: thus, one becomes an adept with the spear; another with the sling; another with a bow and arrows; but this excellence in one line does not hinder their attaining a considerable proficiency in all the others.

266 Before entering on the details of Yahgan life we shall dwell briefly on the charges of savagery and cannibalism made by numerous writers. As early as 1600 the Alacaluf were thought to be cannibals, for in that year Van Noort marooned on Santa Maria island one of his officers charged with insubordination, in the belief that he would die of hunger or be eaten by the savages. A quarter of a century later Jaques L'Hermite charged the Yahgan with cannibalism. In more recent years Darwin and Fitzroy have repeated the accusation on hearsay evidence, and their dictum has been widely published. However, no white man has ever witnessed the act of anthropophagy among any of the Fuegian tribes, while in recent years those who have lived with the natives and come to know them well all agree that the idea of eating human flesh is as repugnant to a Fuegian as to a European. According to Martial (p. 193) the Yahgan ordinarily do not eat dog, fox, or rat, because these animals will eat human flesh.

648 The imputation of barbarity, on the other hand, rests on firmer ground, for there are well-authenticated instances of attack by the Yahgan on European crews. The earliest of these resulted in the death at Nassau bay in 1624 of seventeen men from L'Hermite's ships; the most widely published was the massacre at Woolyia in 1859 of the crew of the missionary schooner *Allen Gardiner*. What provoked these attacks is a secret intombed with their victims. Early voyagers habitually kidnapped natives to serve as pilots and thus aroused merited resentment. Native women often have

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been a source of contention. Intelligent and amicably intended travelers through ignorance of native customs may easily wound native feelings to the point of rousing open hostility. Of the looting of ships and robbing of their crews, it is but just to remark that the Yahgan, although recognizing personal property, habitually shared their provisions with one another. Also, among primitive people in general the robbing or tricking of strangers often is considered entirely ethical or even especially deserving of praise, though the same performance at the expense of a relative or a friend might be condemned. The Yahgan have suffered in public esteem because their morality has been judged on the basis of Christian ethics.

## LANGUAGE

The Yahgan tongue, although it has been studied since the visit of Darwin, as yet is thought to be related to no other New World language. Through missionary labors, chiefly those of the Rev. Thomas Bridges, three large vocabularies have been compiled. Of these one containing about 4000 words on 137 pages in Mr. Bridges' handwriting is still in possession of the Bridges family in Tierra del Fuego. It covers only eleven initial letters. Inside the front cover is written: "Begun this June 19th, 1879." A second vocabulary compiled by Mr. Bridges, aided by several lay members of the English mission, contains about 12,000 words. It is now in possession of the Rev. John Williams in Punta Arenas. Finally, there exists in Belgium a Yahgan vocabulary in two volumes of about 32,430 words written on 1081 pages. It is the result of Mr. Bridges' life-long contact with the Yahgan extending from 1836 until his death in 1898. During his later years, according to his sons, he was continually working over this manuscript. After his death it was lent to Dr. Frederick A. Cook, who had been to Tierra del Fuego with the Belgian Antarctic expedition in 1897 and 1899. Cook removed the manuscript to Belgium, where it has since remained. Plans for its publication were interrupted by the World War.

For printed source-material in Yahgan, students are further indebted to Mr. Bridges for translations of the gospels of St. Luke and St. John, and the Acts of the Apostles. All these, as well as his manuscript dictionaries, are written in the Ellis alphabet. The Rev. John Williams of Punta Arenas has translated the collects and morning and evening prayers into Yahgan, and also has